

Acts 8 – 7 June 2020

“Expanding The Kingdom Beyond Our Comfort Zone”

Introduction

Jesus has ordained there to be an “Age of the Church” empowered by His HS where He pours His attention toward THE WHOLE WORLD

It’s the church’s mission to tell the world about Jesus

About His love, grace and His soon return

But so far, it’s only gone to Jews in Israel.

What does it take to expand the kingdom beyond our comfort zone?

Today, we’ll see 3 things that God gives us to expand His Kingdom

1st Thing God gives us to expand His kingdom is opportunities (Chap 8:1-8)

Read Vs 1-4

1. Saul is a leading Pharisee persecutor of the early Christians.
 - a. Read I Tim 1:12-13
 - b. Read Rom 10:1-2
2. Jesus said, (Read Luke 10:2) “The harvest truly is great but the labourers are few...”
 - a. If you try stamping on a fire in the midst of a harvest field, it will spread.
 - b. “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church” – Tertullian
3. Opportunities to share Christ don’t always come from “good circumstances”.
 - a. Many pray for chances to witness
 - b. Are you still willing, knowing that it may cost you something?

Read 5-8

1. Notice that it wasn't just the 12 Apostles that did miracles, they didn't cease w/ just the Apostles
2. Philip was driven to Samaria b/c of persecution
 - a. This is 1st time Gospel goes beyond Israel
 - b. Great Commission was local to worldwide
3. This will challenge all these new Christians views on racism.
 - a. Can they see all the world as image-bearers, ones made in the image of God?
 - b. Story: Uncle Jeff's baptism – Didn't see the room filled w/ Koreans, it was filled w/ believers
 - c. If it was up to us, we would just stay in our comfort zone, only witnessing to similar people
4. Don't worry about 'targeting' people to witness to, instead just take all opportunities that God gives
 - a. "Oh he's rich, he would make a great Christian". (We're so fleshly)
 - b. If they're in front of you, God must want you to witness to them (thru word and deed)

2nd Thing God gives us to expand His kingdom is the power (Chap 8:9-25)

Read Vs 9-11

1. He used “magic” to “amaze” the people.
2. Not drugs (sorceries) but tricks.
3. No indication he was using satanic power, but could have been.
 - a. Either fleshly tricks or satanic tactics.

Read Vs 12-13

1. Notice they first saw the miracles (vs 6-7) which got their attention.
 - a. But it was the “preaching of the things of the kingdom of God” that got them salvation.
 - b. God’s power is revealed thru preaching!!!
2. Vs 13 – Simon himself follows
3. Now Simon is the one in “wonder”.
 - a. Same word as “bewitched” in vs 9 & 11
4. Nothing to indicate Simon isn’t a true believer, but will he “show his faith by his works” (Jam 2:18)?

Read Vs 14-17

1. Peter and John were sent from Jerusalem
 - a. Takes away the idea of Peter being the Pope
 - b. Last mention of John in Acts
2. The Holy Ghost hadn't fallen upon them yet
 - a. Many struggle with these verses b/c they miss the preposition "upon".
 - b. If you believe in only 1 filling of the Spirit, these verses will be a problem.
 - i. Read John 14:17 – "HS is with & shall be in you".
 - ii. Read Act 1:8 – "receive *power* after that the HS is come upon you"
 - c. Power of HS comes at God's appointed time.
 - i. Maybe God wanted these Jewish Apostles to see non-Jews get saved first-hand.

Read Vs 18-19

1. This will become known as Simony – the attempt to buy or sell spiritual things from money.

- a. Widespread in Catholic Church in 9th-10th century, even selling the Pope's office to highest bidder
- b. But is it in your heart? How do u know?
 - i. You want others to see your "power" or God's?
- c. Remember the true power is to be used to expand God's kingdom not your own.

Read Vs 20-23

1. Simon's life is still bond up by this besetting sin of self-importance.
 - a. The only course of action is to repent
2. Was Simon saved?
 - a. Philip was right to accept Simon's belief
 - i. If someone confesses Christ, accept it
 - b. Peter was also right to now question it
 - i. If someone shows an undegenerated heart, then call it what it is

Read Vs 24-25

1. Peter could humble Simon's heart, he'd have to

3rd Thing God gives us to expand His kingdom is understanding (Chap 8:26-40)

Read Vs 26-31

1. This Ethiopian Eunuch was rich to purchase a scroll. Def interest in knowing God's Word.
2. It's quite a walk of faith to spread the Gospel.
 - a. Vs 26 - Philip obeyed step 1 to go down toward the south.
 - b. Vs 29 – Then the Spirit gave him step 2
3. What is needed to expand the Kingdom is understanding of God's Word.
 - a. Just like the power is not of men, as Simon found out.
 - b. Also the understanding is not of men.
4. It's God's Holy Spirit that brings out eternal things.
 - a. Whether straight from God to man
 - b. Or thru other believers w/ the indwelling Holy Spirit

Read Vs 32-35

1. The specific understanding we need is how Jesus fulfills it all!
2. I believe the eunuch could have been anywhere in the Bible and Philip would have brought it around to Jesus being the center of it all.
3. Read Prov 3:5-6 – Trust that the Lord will explain the things that we just don't understand.
4. The Church should be offering to explain God's eternal plan, some will accept it and some will not.

Read Vs 36-40

1. Notice what it is that the eunuch came to believe.
2. You don't have to understand the finer point of ecclesiology, eschatology, epistemology, and soteriology to be saved!
 - a. You just need to understand as the eunuch
 - i. "I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God"

Conclusion

So, we've seen the 3 things God gives us to expand His kingdom beyond our comfort zone

1. God gives us opportunities

- a. They may come thru persecution
- b. They may not be the people we would choose to share the truth with
- c. But it's God ordained opportunities

2. God gives us the power

- a. The human heart seeks to promote its own power and tactics (weak & temporary)
- b. God desires to empower us with Himself

3. God gives us understanding

- a. God is looking to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are perfect towards Him.

Our commission to expand the Kingdom will always take us beyond our comfort zone!

The problem isn't skin, it's sin

The solution isn't race, it's grace!